

# Why not drink before I'm 21?

**Underage drinking is illegal.** In Illinois, it is illegal for a person under age 21 to buy, possess, or drink alcoholic beverages. Also, a person under age 21 who drives with ANY amount of alcohol in his/her system, may lose his/her driving privileges. This type of suspension may affect future insurance rates and result in charges such as criminal misdemeanor, which may affect future education and employment.

**Drinking makes you less mature.** You are striving to become more mature in your behavior. Alcohol shifts you into reverse. When you put your brain to sleep with alcohol, you are less apt to try to cope and are less able to cope.

**Alcohol may damage your hypothalamus.** The hypothalamus is the part of your brain that controls your "autonomic nervous system." It regulates heartbeat, breathing and other bodily functions. If you drink before that part of your brain is mature, you may permanently damage it. If this happens, you will never reach your full potential. It also may make it easier for you to become addicted to alcohol.

**Alcohol takes away your natural inhibitions.** Alcohol removes more of your control, so you do silly things that you may regret later — like saying the wrong thing, passing on a hill or a curve, or taking more alcohol or other drugs.

**You could develop a serious alcohol problem.** The younger a person is when he/she starts drinking, the quicker and easier he/she may become a problem drinker. If there is alcoholism in your family, the chances are even greater.

**You have an influence on others.** By not drinking or using other drugs, you can be a good role model for your peers and for young children.



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Printed by authority of the State of Illinois. May 2008 — 5M — DAH A 9.2

# ALCOHOL/DRUG EDUCATION & AWARENESS PROGRAM

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# USE & LOSE IT IT

## STUDY GUIDE

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**As a condition of the issuance of a Restricted Driving Permit for a driver's license suspension imposed under Section 11-501.8 of the Illinois Vehicle Code, you must complete the Secretary of State Alcohol/Drug Education & Awareness Program, which consists of a review of this "Use It & Lose It" Alcohol/Drug Education Awareness Program Study Guide and successful completion of a questionnaire administered by a Secretary of State hearing officer.**

### **RDP Eligibility**

Eligibility for an RDP is determined by the length of your suspension.

1. If your license was suspended for three or six months, you may apply for an RDP 15 days prior to the beginning date of the suspension.
2. If your license was suspended for 24 months, you may apply for an RDP 45 days prior to the end of the first 12 months of the suspension.
3. If your license was suspended for 12 months, you are not eligible to apply for an RDP during the suspension.

### **Questionnaire**

When you appear for a hearing, you must complete a questionnaire based on the information in this study guide. You must achieve a score of 75 percent or more before you are granted a hearing. If you score below 75 percent, you must wait at least one day to try again. If you are under age 18 and unmarried, parent/legal guardian consent is required prior to your hearing.

### **Documentation**

At the time of your hearing, you must submit the following documentation:

1. "Use It & Lose It" Alcohol/Drug Education and Awareness Program Study Guide, and
2. Sworn Report completed by the law enforcement officer at the time of your arrest.

In addition, depending on your blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) from a chemical test if taken when you were arrested, you must submit one of the following applicable documents:

- Investigative Alcohol and Drug Evaluation (BAC of .04-.079)
- Alcohol and Drug Evaluation Uniform Report (BAC of .08 or higher)

Only original documents are accepted. An original document is one that bears your original signature and/or author of the document, as applicable. If you lose an original document, you may be able to obtain an original duplicate from your service provider. For more information, please see an informal hearing officer.

### **Rehabilitation**

You also must complete any recommended and/or required rehabilitative activity pertaining to your evaluation's classification of your use/abuse of alcohol/drugs, or provide a written waiver, prior to issuance of an RDP.

### **Informal Hearing**

When you have met the eligibility requirements for an RDP, are prepared to complete the questionnaire, and have obtained all required documentation, you may visit a Driver Services facility to request an informal hearing.

**For a list of facilities, hours and available hearing officers, visit [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com). Please call the location to ensure that a hearing officer is available. For more information regarding the informal hearing process, please contact an informal hearing officer.**

***WWW.CYBERDRIVEILLINOIS.COM***

# REVIEW OF THE LAWS

## **"Use It and Lose It" — Zero Tolerance**

A driver under age 21 caught with any trace of alcohol in his/her system will lose his/her driving privileges. A driver under age 21 also may be charged with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (DUI) if he/she has a blood-alcohol concentration of .08 or greater or other indications of impaired driving.

Following issuance of a uniform traffic citation, Illinois law allows a police officer to require a breath test from a driver under age 21 if the officer has probable cause to believe that the driver has been drinking. If the driver refuses the test or the test reveals any measurable alcohol level, the driver is subject to sanctions including the loss of his/her driver's license.

A person whose driving privileges have been suspended under Section 11-501.8 of the Illinois Vehicle Code is not eligible for restoration of full driving privileges until the expiration of:

- Six months from the effective date of the suspension for refusal or failure to complete a test(s) to determine alcohol concentration under Section 11-501.8;
- Three months from the effective date of the suspension for a chemical test that disclosed an alcohol concentration of more than 0.00 under Section 11-501.8 of the Illinois Vehicle Code.
- Two years from the effective date of the suspension for a person previously suspended under Section 11-501.8 who refuses or fails to complete a test(s) to determine alcohol concentration under Section 11-501.8; or
- One year from the effective date of the suspension imposed for a person who has been previously suspended under Section 11-501.8 following submission to a chemical test(s) that disclosed an alcohol concentration of more than 0.00 under Section 11-501.8.

It is illegal in every state for persons under age 21 to purchase and possess alcoholic beverages. The "Use It & Lose It" (zero tolerance) law in Illinois makes it illegal for persons under age 21 to drive with any measurable alcohol in their blood.

## **Illegal Transportation**

Drinking and driving is not the only alcohol-related offense. It is also illegal to transport alcoholic beverages in the passenger area of a vehicle unless the beverages are in their original sealed containers. No matter whom the alcohol belongs to, the driver of the vehicle can be charged with illegal transportation and any passenger can be charged with illegal possession. The driver of the vehicle will receive a 12-month driver's license suspension for a first offense. A second offense will result in revocation of your driving privileges and vehicle registration.

## **Parental Responsibility**

It is a Class A misdemeanor, with a possible fine of \$1,000 and/or up to 364 days in jail to knowingly allow individuals to gather at a residence when the individuals are under age 21 and drinking.

## **Parental Consent/Withdrawal of Consent**

Drivers ages 16 and 17 must have parent/legal guardian consent in order to obtain a driver's license. A parent/legal guardian may revoke consent for the minor to hold a driver's license at any time, for any reason, until the driver turns 18 by contacting the Secretary of State's office. Driving privileges will not be reinstated until the parent/legal guardian who withdrew consent once again provides consent or until the driver turns 18, whichever occurs first.

## **Nighttime Driving Restrictions**

State law establishes the following nighttime driving restrictions for drivers under age 18:

Sun.-Thurs., 10 p.m.-6 a.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 p.m.-6 a.m. (local curfews may differ).



## Issuance of Restricted Driving Permits

When a driver's license suspension is imposed, the petitioner must serve an initial period during which he/she may not apply for a Restricted Driving Permit (RDP). If serving a three- or six-month suspension, a petitioner may apply for an RDP after 30 days. If serving a 24-month suspension, a petitioner may apply after 12 months. A petitioner is ineligible to apply for an RDP for the entire period of a 12-month suspension.

Once a petitioner becomes eligible, he/she may apply for an RDP to be used during the remainder of the suspension for employment, medical or educational purposes. An "undue hardship" must exist, such as extreme difficulty getting to and from work, school or regularly scheduled medical visits. It also applies to an inability to fulfill a requirement for on-the-job driving. There must be no reasonable alternative means of transportation available to the petitioner. An undue hardship does not exist simply because the petitioner's driving privileges are suspended.

## Alcohol Facts

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. It is the mood-altering ingredient in wine, beer and distilled liquor. Because it contains calories, it is considered a food, but the calories in no way contribute to good nutrition. A 12-ounce bottle of beer contains approximately the same amount of alcohol as 5 ounces of wine, or 1 1/2 ounces of 80-proof liquor. Alcohol is absorbed in the blood stream and transmitted to all parts of the body.

Several factors influence the effects of alcohol, including the amount of alcohol consumed, the rate at which it is consumed, the presence of food in the stomach, and the individual's weight, mood and previous experience with the drug.

- With moderate drinking a person may experience dizziness, dulling of senses and impairment of coordination, reflexes, memory and judgment.
- Taken in larger quantities, alcohol may produce staggering, slurred speech, double vision, dulling of senses, sudden mood changes and unconsciousness.
- Taken in much larger quantities over a short period of time, death may occur due to depression of the parts of the brain that control breathing and heart rate. It also may cause damage to the liver, heart and pancreas.

- Excessive alcohol use may lead to malnutrition, stomach irritation, lowered resistance to disease and brain or nervous system damage.

According to the American Medical Society, "Alcoholism is a chronic, progressive and potentially fatal disease. It is characterized by tolerance and physical dependency or organ changes, or both — all direct or indirect consequences of the alcohol ingested."

Increased tolerance to alcohol may lead to physical dependence. At that point, alcohol becomes a part of a person's normal function. Physical dependence is characterized by the presence of withdrawal symptoms when use is discontinued suddenly.

Alcohol is an addictive drug. When taken in sufficient quantities, the body becomes adapted or accustomed to its presence. Drinking as much as a quart of liquor daily for one week can create a state of dependence. After dependence has been established, if drinking is stopped, there will be withdrawal symptoms. One way to end the withdrawal is to take more of the addictive drug/alcohol. Over a period of time, it is necessary to increase the amount of the drug in order to ward off withdrawal. Because alcohol is a depressant, symptoms are often those of an agitated state. Persons withdrawing from the use of alcohol are jumpy, edgy, irritable, hyped up. These symptoms are the exact opposite of alcohol's depressant qualities.

## "Use It & Lose It" and DUI Facts

- Alcohol is a factor in at least 47 percent of all fatal crashes.
- Someone is killed in an alcohol-related crash every 30 minutes.
- Nationally in 2006, an estimated 17,602 people lost their lives in alcohol-related crashes.
- Nationally, 31 percent of drivers between the ages of 15 and 20 killed in traffic crashes had been drinking.
- In 2006, 26,663 Illinois drivers under age 21 lost their driving privileges due to "Use It & Lose It" law violations.
- An estimated two out of every five Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash during their lifetime.
- Nationally, more than 1.4 million drivers are arrested each year for DUI. This amounts to one out of every 139 licensed drivers in the U.S.